

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1808

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AEMBASSY KUWAIT 232

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY LODNON

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 0308

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, AG

SUBJ: OPEC CONFERENCE: A LOOK BACK

SUMMARY: OPEC ALGIERS CONFERENCE APPEARS HAVE BEEN
MIXED SUCCESS FOR GOA. ALTHOUGH POLITICIZATION NEVER
WENT VERY FAR, ALGERIANS HAD THEIR WAY ON THE KEY
SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES: SUMMIT MEETING, WORKING PAPERS
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SOLIDARITY OF LDOS AND OPEC, AND JOINING OIL PRICES

TO OTHER ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED. ON OTHER HAND,
VARIOUS REPORTS INDICATE ALGERIAN TACTICS RAISED
HACKLES MORE CONSERVATIVE ARABS, WHICH MAY CAUSE
TROUBLE IN FUTURE. END SUMMARY

1. GENERAL IMPRESSION OF PRESS AND DIPLOMATS IN
ALGIERS IS THAT OPEC CONFERENCE BASICALLY MET
ALGERIAN GOALS.

2. MOST IMPORTANTLY, IN ALGERIAN EYES, CONFERENCE
AGREED TO A SUMMIT MEETING ALONG LINES SUGGESTED BY
PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE.

3. ALGERIAN MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND ENERGY
ABDESSELAM PRESENTED A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS FOR
DISCUSSION AT THE SUMMIT BUT THE MINISTERS DID NOT
DISCUSS THEM IN DEPTH. THEY AGREED, HOWEVER, ON
EXPERT AND FURTHER MINISTERIAL MEETINGS TO CONSIDER
PROPOSALS, SUPPORTED BY FULL BACK-UP PAPERS WHICH HAVE
ALSO BEEN PREPARED BY THE ALGERIANS. WORDING OF
ABDESSELAM PROPOSALS MAY HAVE BEEN TONED DOWN TO
MEET SAUDI SENSIBILITIES, BUT APPEARS VERY LITTLE
OF SUBSTANCE LOST BY ALGERIANS.

4. PROBABLY NEXT MOST IMPORTANT GOAL IN ALGERIAN
EYES IS MAINTENANCE OF OPEC SOLIDARITY WITH LDC
MAJORITY. THIS OBJECTIVE WAS MET BY COMMUNIQUE
SPECIFYING OPEC WOULD MERGE WITH DEVELOPING WORLD
FOR PARTICIPATION IN QTE FRENCH PROPOSED QTE
CONFERENCE ON DEVELOPMENT AND RAW MATERIALS.
ALGERIAN INFLUENCE ON DAKAR CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 3,
GROUP OF 77 CONFERENCE HERE IN ALGIERS FEBRUARY 15-18
AND CUBAN NON-ALIGNED PREPARATORY CONFERENCE FOR
EIGHTH SPECIAL SESSION OF UN, FEBRUARY 22, WILL
PRESUMABLY PROMOTE ALGERIAN LEADERSHIP AND ENSURE THAT
DEVELOPING WORLD IS BOUGHT INTO OPEC PREPARATIONS.
(FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCE EXPRESSED IRRITATION AT MISCITING
OF GISCARD'S PROPOSED ENERGY CONFERENCE AS FURTHER
MOVE AWAY FROM TRIPARTITE FORMULA. THIS IS ESPECIALLY
GALLING BECAUSE IN DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN BOUMEDIENE
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AND PONIATOWSKI IN DECEMBER 1974, FRENCH THOUGHT
ALGERIANS HAD AGREED TO CONFERENCE PRIMARILY FOCUSING
ON ENERGY AND ONLY SECONDARILY COVERING OTHER COMMODITIES.)

5. FINALLY, ALGERIANS HAVE ASSURED THAT THER WILL
NOT BE A CONFERENCE ON OIL PRICES ALONE, BUT HAVE
SUCCEEDED IN BURYING ISSUE AMONG NUMBER OF OTHER
PROPOSALS ON OPEC/DC/LDC RELATIONS.

6. THOUGH MOST SPECIFICS WERE NOT DISCUSSED AT CONFERENCE, FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCE REPORTS THAT IMF WAS DISCUSSED, WITH OPEC COUNTRIES THINKING OF DEMANDING 30 PERCENT IMF QUOTA. THIS DISCUSSION REFLECTED IN AMOUZEGAR (IRAN) REMARKS TO PRESS ABOUT OPEC BEING UNDERREPRESENTED IN IMF AND THAT OPEC SHOULD HAVE 30 PERCENT QUOTA. AMOUZEGAR ALSO SAID BY 1980 OPEC COUNTRIES' RESERVES WOULD BE BETWEEN 350-400 BILLION DOLLARS.

7. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS AT CONFERENCE WERE THAT ALGERIANS, THOUGH PERHAPS HAVING TO SLOW THEIR PACE A BIT AND SACRIFICING SOME POLITICIZATION OF CONFERENCE, GOT SUBSTANTIALLY WHAT THEY WANTED. DELEGATIONS REPEATED THIS VIEW, ADDING THAT ALGERIAN STEAMROLLER HAD WORKED WELL. ON OTHER HAND SOME OF REMARKS MADE TO US PRIVATELY BY DELEGATION INDICATE THAT THERE WAS RESENTMENT AT WAY STEAMROLLER OPERATED. WHILE THERE NO ONE ON THE OPEC SCENE WHO SEEMS ABLE MATCH THEM, WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE THESE RESENTMENTS BECOME A PROBLEM FOR ALGERIANS.

8. ATMOSPHERIC NOTE: ALGERIANS APPEARED TO SPARE NO EXPENSE, BUT CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS LEFT MUCH TO BE DESIRED. MINISTERS WERE WELL CARED FOR, BUT OTHERS WERE GLAD TO LEAVE THEIR "PRISON". PRESS HAD NICKNAMED HOTEL AL MANAR STALAG 9. IT WAS WITHOUT WATER SOMETIMES AND WITHOUT HOT WATER ALL THE TIME. ONE OLD TIMER REFERRED TO PRESS ARRANGEMENTS AS WORSE THAN PRIOR MEETINGS IN ALGIERS.
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